

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

February 4, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly 86** in its entirety.

This bill would establish certain requirements and prohibitions for complementary and alternative health care (CAHC) practitioners; would provide exemptions for CAHC practitioners from prohibitions against acting without certain healthcare-related licenses, certifications and other credentials if they comply with provisions in the bill; and would provide the Department of Safety and Professional Services with the authority to investigate and take action against a CAHC practitioner for violating a provision in the bill.

I have been a strong advocate of ensuring everyone has access to quality, affordable healthcare, whether it is ensuring we protect healthcare access for people with pre-existing conditions, expanding access to telehealth services in rural communities, or ensuring Wisconsinites can find healthcare treatment and services that are right for them. Equally important is ensuring patients and consumers are protected.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to altering current licensure standards in a way that would allow some practitioners to practice without the necessary training. Our medical licensure requirements exist to ensure that license holders possess the education and training necessary to safeguard the health and safety of their patients. This bill would devalue the level of competency required and could potentially endanger patients by exempting some individuals from needing to meet those same standards.

Moreover, I share concerns raised by the Wisconsin Council on Mental Health and the National Association of Social Workers that this bill would allow providers to perform psychotherapy and treat mental health disorders. Especially in the midst of the corona virus pandemic, investing in and expanding access to mental health services is critical; however, I have concerns about mental health services being provided to vulnerable Wisconsinites without the necessary training, which could have detrimental effects on individuals who might already be in crisis.

Access to healthcare—including mental healthcare—is critically important, and I welcome the opportunity to review legislation on this issue that addresses these concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor